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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 001402

SIPDIS

STATE DEPT FOR EUR/NCE - WILLIAM SILKWORTH

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TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#) [RO](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: ROMANIA'S CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR SEEBRIG DEPLOYMENT
TO AFGHANISTAN

REF: STATE 110073

Classified By: POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF ROBERT GILCHRIST FOR REASONS 1.4
B AND D

11. (C) MFA NATO Division Director Mirela Maghiar told PolOff in a June 16 discussion regarding Romanian support for the South East Europe Brigade (SEEBRIG) that a U.S. contribution to SEEBRIG of USD 1 million this year as part of the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), would constitute "useful and instrumental support for SEEBRIG." (Reftel) Underscoring Romanian support for the Southeast Europe Defense Ministerial (SEDM) and SEEBRIG, Maghiar stated that Romania has "invested a lot" in SEDM/SEEBRIG and would like SEEBRIG to become "an operational force." She continued that the GOR will continue to support SEEBRIG's deployment to Afghanistan, "subject to financial limitations." Noting that in early 2006 Romania will "assume coordination of Kabul International Airport," she added that Romania's budgetary constraints mean that it "can only do so much."

12. (C) MOD Strategic Affairs Directorate Head Mihaela Matei underscored in a June 17 meeting with PolOff Romania's "clear commitment" to support a SEEBRIG deployment to Afghanistan. Echoing Maghiar's observations, Matei observed that "Romania's budget is really stretched" and a SEEBRIG deployment "financially might raise some problems...not just with Romania but also with other SEEBRIG member states." Matei characterized the USG provision of USD 1 million to SEEBRIG as "very good news." She also observed that Romania is one of the "very few NATO countries that has kept forces in both Afghanistan and Iraq" without withdrawing or reducing troop levels.

13. (C) Comment. Romanian expressions of concern about budgetary limitations and deployment capacity reflect bona fide resource restraints. Our interlocutors clearly appreciated likely GPOI support (subject to Congressional approval) for SEEBRIG. Romanian officials have consistently told us that they recognize SEDM/SEEBRIG's value as a "regional confidence building measure" but would like to see SEEBRIG become operational. End Comment.

14. (U) Amembassy Bucharest's reporting telegrams are available on the Bucharest SIPRNet website:
www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/bucharest
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